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in so much detail in future; and that it recommends (a) that officers attending the next Indian Science Congress should be regarded as on duty, (b) that a catalogue of scientific serials prepared by the Asiatic Society of Bengal should be published at the expense of government, and (c) that experiments should be undertaken, as requested by the Punjab Veterinary Department, to determine the vitality of rinderpest virus under Indian conditions. *Nature* remarks: "Of any far-reaching advisory purpose, of any great original directive enterprise, of anything in the nature of spontaneous movement, this report shows no record; one looks in vain for any reference to scientific education, or even for a connected account—as contrasted with bald, disjointed departmental summaries—of the general progress of science in India, vital affairs in which a board of scientific advice might be expected to exercise a missionary influence, if not to take a commanding lead. The simple fact is that, so far as the advisory business goes, this Report of the Board of Scientific Advice for India is a document of the *ex-officio* genus; and it can scarcely be otherwise when the president of the board is merely an *ex-officio* hierarch of the Indian Secretariat, instead of being a man of science specially selected for his critical knowledge of scientific affairs."

WE learn from the *Journal* of the American Medical Association that as a result of the report on the inexactitude of clinical thermometers, read by Mr. Woog at a recent meeting, the Paris Academy of Sciences appointed a commission to study the question. Mr. Grimbert, the reporter of this commission, believes that it is necessary to prohibit the sale of all thermometers the precision of which is not guaranteed by official control. The war having suppressed the importation from Germany, France depends for her supply on Switzerland, England and the United States, and there has been a considerable rise of price without a corresponding guarantee of precision. According to Mr. Woog, the central pharmacy of the army has been obliged to refuse as much as 80 per cent. of the ship-

ments offered. The French manufacturers have assured the commission that they will soon be in a position to supply clinical thermometers at the same price as those obtained from Germany before the war, and that they are prepared to submit to official control. Furthermore, the director of tests at the Conservatory of Arts believes that it is feasible to reduce considerably the fee paid for testing thermometers.

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#### UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

UNDER the will of Eckley Brinton Coxe, Jr., late president of the University of Pennsylvania Museum, the university was bequeathed the sum of \$500,000 as an endowment fund for the maintenance of the museum, its publications and expeditions. He also bequeathed the sum of \$100,000 to the university, the income of which is to be used towards increasing the salaries of professors.

SETH Low, president of Columbia University from 1890 to 1901, and trustee from 1881 to 1914, by his will, bequeathed \$15,000 to a cousin and \$12,000 to the daughter of his former nurse, half of these sums to go to Columbia University on their deaths. On the death of Mrs. Low several educational bequests became effective. Canton Christian College will receive about \$70,000, the University of Virginia, Berea College and the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute will each receive about \$50,000. Mr. Low gave large gifts to Columbia University during his presidency, including the sum of \$1,200,000 for the erection of the library building in memory of his father.

BEGINNING with this fall the course of instruction in veterinary medicine at the University of Pennsylvania has been placed upon the same basis as other departments of the university in regard to the length of course, four full years now being required for the professional degree.

At New York University Professor John Charles Hubbard succeeds Emeritus Professor Daniel W. Hering as professor of physics; and

Professor Willard D. Fisher has been appointed professor of economics and director of the graduate division of business administration.

DR. JOHN C. SHEDD, who for the past year has been dean of Olivet College and for seven years head of the physics department, has entered upon his work as head of the physics department of Occidental College, Los Angeles.

DR. M. C. TANQUARY, zoologist on the Cockerland Arctic Expedition, returned to this country early in the summer and has recently been appointed assistant professor of entomology in the Kansas State Agricultural College. Mr. A. H. Hersh, of Princeton University, has been appointed instructor in zoology to succeed Mr. Ray Allen, who has accepted a position in Cornell University.

THE following laboratory appointments have been made in the laboratories of the University and Bellevue Hospital Medical College: P. V. Prewitt, A.M. (Missouri), instructor in physiology; E. R. Hoskins, Ph.D. (Minnesota), instructor in anatomy, and J. L. Conel, Ph.D. (Illinois), instructor in anatomy.

DR. L. V. HEILBRUN has been appointed to an instructorship in microscopic anatomy in the college of medicine of the University of Illinois. Last year he was associate in zoology at the University of Chicago.

DR. HARLAN L. TRUMBULL, instructor in chemistry in the University of Washington, has been promoted to be assistant professor.

DR. FREDERIC A. BESLEY has been appointed professor of surgery in Northwestern University Medical School and a member of the attending surgical staff at Mercy Hospital.

C. F. BURGER has been appointed instructor in plant pathology in the graduate school of tropical agriculture of the University of California at Riverside, and Alfred Free Swain, formerly of Montana State College and of Stanford University, assistant in entomology there. Ralph Patterson Royce, formerly livestock editor of the *Missouri Farmer*, has been appointed instructor in animal husbandry at the University of California Farm.

DR. JAMES E. BELL, instructor in chemistry in the University of Washington, has been called as associate professor to Throop Institute of Technology, Pasadena, Calif., where he will have charge of the work in inorganic chemistry.

## DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

### DIFFUSION VS. INDEPENDENT ORIGIN: A REJOINDER TO PROFESSOR G. ELLIOT SMITH

IN the "crude sketch of views" published in *SCIENCE* for August 11, 1916, Professor Elliot Smith attempts to discredit a method in ethnology which he regards as dogmatic and to substitute for it another which he apparently regards as critical. The issue is the time-honored one of diffusion *vs.* independent development in culture.

It seems to the writer that the picture of the *modus operandi* of "most modern ethnologists" drawn in the initial paragraphs of Professor Smith's sketch is an altogether erroneous one. Without doubt the writers of the classical period of English anthropology often abused the concepts of "independent origin" and "psychic unity of mankind." Of them may be mentioned Spencer, Tylor, Lubbock, Frazer, Lang. The concept of the diffusion of culture through historic contact was, however, by no means foreign even to these thinkers, although they may have neglected to make sufficient use of it in their theoretical constructions. Tylor, in particular, was thoroughly conversant with the problems and manifold difficulties involved in the phenomena of cultural diffusion. As to the modern ethnologists, it would be hard indeed to mention one who has not at some time of his career grappled with the problem of diffusion *vs.* independent development, in material culture, art, religion, social customs. Nor is there one who in his interpretative attempts would make use of the concepts of "psychic unity" and "independent origin" to the exclusion of those of "diffusion" and "historic contact."

On the other hand, a school of thinkers has arisen within relatively recent years, who, following in the lead of Ratzel, have, however,